

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 1578

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: OAS, PFOR, PA

SUBJEIP: OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS AND AMBASSADOR
MAILLIARD FROM LANDAU

REF: (A) STATE 091711 (B) ASUNCION 1532

1. I CALLED ON FONMIN SAPENA PASTOR TODAY TO INFORM HIM THAT I HAD BEEN TOLD BY WASHINGTON THAT THERE WAS NO TRUTH IN A LOCAL PRESS REPORT THAT GALO PLAZA'S TERM AS SECRETARY GENERAL MAY BE EXTENDED BY TWO YEARS. SAPENA PASTOR APPEARED DISAPPOINTED. IT WOULD HAVE FITTED HIS PURPOSES BEAUTIFULLY BECAUSE HE COULD HAVE ABANDONED HIS QUEST TO BE SEC GEN AND DEVOTED HIS TIME AND EFFORT TO OBTAIN THE PRESIDENCY OF THE ASSEMBLY.

2. IN REPLY TO MY QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS PLANS FOR THE FORTHCOMING MEETING, HE SAID THAT HE WAS NOT QUITE CERTAIN WHEN HE WOULD GO BECAUSE OF A SCHEDULED STATE VISIT BY URUGUAYAN PRESIDENT BORDABERRY TO PARAGUAY MAY 13 TO 16, DURING WHICH PERIOD HE MUST BE IN ASUNCION. HE SAID HE MAY GO TO THE OPENING AND THEN RETURN TO PARAGUAY ON THE 12TH OR HE MIGHT TO TO WASHINGTON ONLY AFTER THE 16TH. HE HAS NOT YET MADE A DECISION.

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3. PARAGUAYAN AMBASSADOR TO THE OAS SOLANO LOPEZ, WHO IS AT PRESENT IN ASUNCION AND WHO IS RETURNING APRIL 24 TO WASHINGTON, SEEMED TO HAVE GIVEN SAPENA PASTOR'S SPIRIT A BIG BOOST. FROM MY PAST CONVERSATIONS IT APPEARED THAT SAPENA PASTOR HAD REACHED A CONCLUSION THAT HE COULD NOT BE ELECTED AS SECRETARY GENERAL. IN A FRIENDLY BUT REALISTIC WAY I STRONGLY SUPPORTED THIS ASSUMPTION AND AS DEPARTMENT KNOWS HE APPEARED QUITE READY TO TRY FOR THE PRESIDENCY OF THE UPCOMING GENERAL ASSEMBLY. SOLANO LOPEZ, WHO HAS ALWAYS BEEN VERY GUNGHO IN GETTING SAPENA PASTOR ELECTED AS SEC GEN, APPARENTLY REASSURED HIM THAT HE STILL HAD A GOOD CHANCE PARTICULARLY WITH THE NEW HONDURAN GOVERNMENT WITH WHOM SAPENA PASTOR AND SOLANO LOPEZ CLAIM TO HAVE STRONG TIES. SOLANO LOPEZ' WISHFUL THINKING OBVIOUSLY HAS AFFECTED SAPENA TO THE EXTENT THAT HE NOW THINKS HE CAN WIN THE RACE. HE TOLD ME THAT HE HAD INSTRUCTED HIS EMBASSY TO SAY THAT HE COULD NOT ASPIRE TO BOTH POSITIONS, NAMELY THAT OF SEC GEN AND PRESIDENT OF THE ASSEMBLY. IN HIS OWN MIND SAPENA PASTOR CONSIDERS THIS A FLEXIBLE POSITION (BUT I UNDERSTAND HIS EMBASSY HAS CARRIED OUT HIS INSTRUCTIONS IN A MORE NARROW WAY TO MAKE IT APPEAR THAT HE IS DISINTERESTED IN THE PRESIDENCY).

4. SAPENA TOLD ME THAT SOLANO LOPEZ WAS RETURNING TONIGHT TO WASHINGTON WITH COMPLETE INSTRUCTIONS AND WOULD CALL ON THE DEPARTMENT MONDAY. SAPENA ALSO VOLUNTEERED THE INFORMATION THAT HIS WASHINGTON EMBASSY HAD ASKED HIM WHETHER HE DESIRED A BILATERAL WITH THE SECRETARY. HE SAID THAT HE HAS NOT A SINGLE ISSUE PENDING THAT WAS WORTHWHILE DISCUSSING AND THAT FRANKLY IT WOULD BE A WASTE OF TIME FOR HIM AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, FOR THE SECRETARY. HOWEVER, SHOULD SECRETARY KISSINGER HOLD BILATERALS WITH ALL THE OTHERS, HE WOULD HAVE TO ASK FOR ONE IN ORDER NOT TO LOOK BAD.

5. IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE AND SINCE I BELIEVE THAT THE SECRETARY WILL PROBABLY LIMIT HIS BILATERALS TO FEW COUNTRIES, I RECOMMEND THAT THE DEPARTMENT INFORM THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PARAGUAYAN EMBASSY THAT THE SECRETARY WILL HOLD ONLY VERY FEW BILATERALS BUT WOULD BE LOOKING FORWARD TO TALKING TO FONMIN SAPENA PASTOR IN THE CORRIDORS AND AT SOCIAL EVENTS. THIS REPLIES REF (A).
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